

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1216

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E.O. 11652: N/A

RAGS: PFOR, PINT, HU

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL OF GOH HEAD OF CHURCH AFFAIRS

1. I CALLED ON IMRE MIKLOS, HEAD OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR CHURCH AFFAIRS, THIS WEEK TO DISCUSS STATE-CHURCH RELATIONS IN LIGHT OF MINDZENTY DECISION AND KADAR'S RECENT ENDORSEMENT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE RIGHT OF "BELIEVERS" TO HOLD ANY POSITIONS IN THE STATE EXCEPT THOSE IN THE PARTY.

2. MIKLOS SAID CARDINAL MINDZENTY HAD NOT BEEN A MAJOR OBSTACLE IN U.S.-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS BUT THAT HIS PRESENCE IN EMBASSY HAD UNDOUBTEDLY IMPEDED THE DEVELOPMENT IN SOME ASPECTS. WITH THE RECENT PAPAL DECISION, GOH NOW REGARDS THE MINDZENTY ISSUE AS CLOSED, BOTH ECCLESIASTICALLY AND POLITICALLY.

3. I NOTED MINDZENTY WOULD SOON BE VISITING THE U.S. AND THAT I HOPED GOH WOULD NOT OVER-REACT IF HE SAID SOME THINGS THEY DID NOT LIKE. MIKLOS SAID THEY WERE AWARE OF THE TRIP AND ALSO THAT HE WOULD SHORTLY BE PUBLISHING A BOOK. MINDZENTY HAD ALREADY SAID EVERYTHING HE HAD TO SAY AND GOH WAS NOT UNDULY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT ELSE HE MIGHT SAY, ALTHOUGH POSSIBLY IT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO PROCESS OF

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DETENTE. MIKLOS DECLINED TO COMMENT ON WHY THE POPE HAD

SIMPLY APPOINTED AN APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR IN ESZTERGOM INSTEAD OF A NEW ARCHBISHOP AT THIS TIME, SIMPLY SAYING THAT GOH WOULD NOT HAVE OBJECTED, BUT THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD INSISTED ON DOING IT ALL AT ONCE.

4. HE ALSO AVOIDED DISCUSSION OF THE SPECIFIC ISSUES REMAINING TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE VATICAN, COMMENTING ONLY THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE CONTINUING AND THAT THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE WOULD LEAD TO FURTHER SOLUTIONS. HE DID COMMENT THAT THE SIX SEMINARIES OPERATING IN HUNGARY HAD EXCESS CAPACITY.

5. ON THE MATTER OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN HUNGARY, MIKLOS SAID HIS RECENT ARTICLE IN NEPSZABADSAG WAS NOT A NEW POLICY BUT A RESTATEMENT OF EXISTING POLICY AND ITS PROJECTION INTO THE FUTURE. HE STRESSED THAT FULL FREEDOM OF RELIGION WAS ASSURED FOR ALL FAITHS AND DENOMINATIONS AND THAT THEY WERE NOT SO MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IDEALISTIC AND MATERIALISTIC PHILOSOPHIES AS BETWEEN THE SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS OF SOCIALISM. HE SAID HIS ARTICLE WAS RELATED MORE TO THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGREEMENT ON CHURCH-STATE RELATION IN HUNGARY THAN TO THE POPE'S DECISION ON MINDZENTY. (COMMENT: KADAR'S REITERATION OF A POLICY OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN HIS LATEST SPEECH WAS EXPLICITLY RELATED TO THE MINDZENTY DECISION AS WELL.)

6. MIKLOS ALSO DISCUSSED THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF HIS OFFICE, DETAILS OF WHICH ARE INCLUDED IN MEMCON BEING SENT DEPARTMENT.

7. FONMINISTRY PREVIOUSLY TOLD ME THAT FOLLOWING THIS CONVERSATION THEY WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO MY HAVING CONTACT WITH THE PRINCIPAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE COUNTRY, AND I PLAN TO DO SO IN CONNECTION WITH FUTURE VISITS TO VARIOUS CITIES. MIKLOS REITERATED THIS WILLINGNESS DURING OUR CONVERSATION.
PEDERSEN

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